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SCIENCE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 1910

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THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE SOME REFORMS NEEDED IN THE TEACHING OF PHYSICS¹

LAST year's decision of the council of the American Association shows clearly the desirability of distinguishing between the work of the various sections and that of the more technical, scientific societies which meet in conjunction with the association. By leaving the presentation of special papers on research topics to the American Physical Society our section will in future pay more attention than heretofore to the discussion of general topics and by joint sessions with other sections strengthen the, in recent years, somewhat neglected ties between physics and allied sciences. There is an abundance of general subjects from which to choose.

For example, during the past few years a renewed interest has been shown, especially by high school teachers, in the teaching of physics—leading in the course of events to the so-called “new movement among physics teachers,” new only in so far as it is an organized effort to improve the teaching of the subject in the high schools.

Your speaker has followed this movement with great interest, hoping that some definite reform might be accomplished by it; but it must be admitted that, as far as actual improvements in those high schools, where such improvements are most needed, are concerned, the progress has been very, very slow. The strongest censure which

¹ Address of the vice-president and chairman of Section B—Physics. American Association for the Advancement of Science, Boston, 1909.